

Edmund Randolph Purves Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2012

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm77031211>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms012111>

Prepared by Thelma Queen

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

Collection Summary

Title: Edmund Randolph Purves Papers

Span Dates: 1916-1964

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1950-1964)

ID No.: MSS31211

Creator: Purves, Edmund Randolph, 1897-1964

Extent: 2,000 items

Extent: 7 containers

Extent: 2.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm77031211>

Summary: Architect. Correspondence, speeches, articles, appointment calendars, architectural drawings, and printed material relating to Purves's career as director and executive director of the American Institute of Architects.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Chatelain, Leon, 1902-1979--Correspondence.

Purves, Edmund Randolph, 1897-1964.

Purvis family--Correspondence.

Wright, Frank Lloyd, 1867-1959--Correspondence.

Organizations

American Institute of Architects.

Subjects

Architecture--Societies, etc.

Architecture.

World War, 1914-1918--Personal narratives, American.

World War, 1939-1945--Personal narratives, American.

Occupations

Architects.

Provenance

The papers of Edmund Randolph Purves, architect, were given to the Library of Congress by his widow, Mary Carroll Purves, in 1970.

Processing History

The papers of Edmund Randolph Purves were arranged and described in 1971. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Edmund Randolph Purves is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Edmund Randolph Purves are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Edmund Randolph Purves Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1897, June 20	Born, Philadelphia, Pa.
1917	Member, French army, American Field Service
1917-1919	Member, American Expeditionary Forces
1920	B.S., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
1920	Finalist in Paris Prize design competition
1926	Married Mary Carroll Spencer
1927	Became practicing architect
1927	Cofounder with Kenneth M. Day of Purves and Day architectural firm
1927-1932	Architect with Purves and Day
1932-1937	Dissolved partnership with Day in 1932 and practiced independently
1937-1941	Member, architectural firm of Purves, Cope, and Stewart
1941-1945	Served in United States Army, Seventh Air Force
1941-1949	Director, American Institute of Architects (with leave of absence for military service)
1949-1961	Executive director, American Institute of Architects
1961-1962	Consulting director, American Institute of Architects
1962-1964	Associate with Chatelain, Gauger, and Nolan
1964, Apr. 7	Died, Washington, D. C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Edmund Randolph Purves (1897-1964) span the period 1916-1964, with the greater part from 1950 to 1964. The collection consists of correspondence, speeches, articles, appointment calendars, architectural drawings, and printed material relating partially to Purves's career as director (1941-1949) and executive director (1949-1961) of the American Institute of Architects. The collection is organized into [Family Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Speech and Article File](#), and [Miscellany](#) series.

Included in the [Family Correspondence](#) are letters to members of Purves's family regarding a memorial in England to his parents. In the General Correspondence are letters of a congratulatory nature from other architects on his appointments as director and executive director of the American Institute of Architects and on his becoming an associate of the firm Chatelain, Gauger, and Nolan. Among the correspondents are Leon Chatelain and Frank Lloyd Wright.

The [Speeches and Articles File](#) series contains copies of many of Purves's articles for the AIA Journal. In the [Miscellany](#) are papers relating to his military career in World War I and World War II, appointment calendars, a few architectural drawings, and printed matter, some of which relates to the British writer Kenneth Grahame.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in four series:

- [Family Correspondence, 1919-1963](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1939-1962](#)
- [Speech and Article File, 1936-1961](#)
- [Miscellany, 1916-1964](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<p><u>Family Correspondence, 1919-1963</u></p> <p>Letters sent and received by family members. Arranged alphabetically.</p>
BOX 1-2	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1939-1962</u></p> <p>Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged alphabetically.</p>
BOX 3-4	<p><u>Speech and Article File, 1936-1961</u></p> <p>Handwritten and typewritten drafts and printed copies of speeches and articles. Arranged alphabetically by title, where possible, and chronologically by year, otherwise.</p>
BOX 5-7	<p><u>Miscellany, 1916-1964</u></p> <p>Papers relating to Purves's military career during World War I and World II, appointment calendars, bills and receipts, biographical papers, photographs, and printed matter. Arranged by type of material.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Family Correspondence, 1919-1963 Letters sent and received by family members. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX 1	Purves, Alan C.
BOX 1	Purves, Austin
BOX 1	Purves, Dale
BOX 1	Purves, Edmund S.
BOX 1	Purves, John C.
BOX 1	Purves, Mary Carroll
BOX 1	Purves, Pierre
BOX 1-2	General Correspondence, 1939-1962 Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX 1	"A" miscellaneous
BOX 1	<i>Architectural Forum</i>
BOX 1	"Ba-By" miscellaneous
BOX 1	Biddle, Francis
BOX 1	Burelson, Omar
BOX 1	"Ca-Cu" miscellaneous
BOX 1	Chapman, Grosvenor
BOX 1	Chatelain, Leon
BOX 1	"Da-Du" miscellaneous
BOX 1	Day, Mabel
BOX 1	"E" miscellaneous
BOX 1	Eisenhower, Dwight D.
BOX 1	"Fa-Fu" miscellaneous
BOX 1	F. Stuart Fitzpatrick Memorial Award
BOX 1	Fadiman, Clifton
BOX 1	Finley, David E.
BOX 1	Flanders, Ralph
BOX 1	"Ga-Gu" miscellaneous
BOX 1	"Ha-Hy" miscellaneous
BOX 1	Hays, Brooks
BOX 1	Howland, Richard H.
BOX 1	"I" miscellaneous
BOX 1	"J" miscellaneous
BOX 1	"Ka-Ko" miscellaneous
BOX 2	"La-Lu" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Literary Society

General Correspondence, 1939-1962

Container	Contents
BOX 2	"Ma-Mu" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Mathias, Charles M., Jr.
BOX 2	Mills, Abbot L., Jr.
BOX 2	Morely, Felix
BOX 2	"N" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Nixon, Richard M.
BOX 2	"O" miscellaneous
BOX 2	"Pa-Pr" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Quiller-Couch, Foy
BOX 2	"R" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Reynolds, Richard S., Jr.
BOX 2	"Sa-Su" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Scheick, William H.
BOX 2	Scott, Hugh
BOX 2	Steinhardt, Joseph
BOX 2	"T" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Truman, Harry S.
BOX 2	Udall, Stewart L.
BOX 2	"V" miscellaneous
BOX 2	"Wa-Wu" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Widnall, William B.
BOX 2	Will, Philip, Jr.
BOX 2	Wright, Frank Lloyd
BOX 2	"Y-Z" miscellaneous
BOX 2	Unidentified
BOX 3-4	Speech and Article File, 1936-1961 Handwritten and typewritten drafts and printed copies of speeches and articles. Arranged alphabetically by title, where possible, and chronologically by year, otherwise.
BOX 3	Speeches
BOX 3	"Building and Housing"
BOX 3	"The Institute, Legislation and You"
BOX 3	"Our Profession,"
BOX 3	1954, Sept.
BOX 3	1954, Nov. 13
BOX 3	Its place in America's future
BOX 3	"The Preservation of Antiquity"
BOX 3	"The Profession Today"
BOX 3	"Who Runs the Construction Industry?"
BOX 3	Untitled, 1948, 1950-1961
BOX 3	Articles
BOX 3	"Alleged Subversive Activities of Certain Members of the A.I.A."
BOX 3	"The Architect and the Superman Myth"
BOX 3	"The Architectural Museum"
BOX 3	"Beaux Arts Come Home All Is Forgiven"
BOX 3	"Below the Tenth Floor"

Speech and Article File, 1936-1961

Container

Contents

BOX 3	"The Construction Industry and the United States Government"
BOX 3	"The Construction Industry Looks at the Government "
BOX 3	"Conventions"
BOX 3	"Divided We Stand"
BOX 3	"Federal Culture, Friend or Foe?"
BOX 3	"A Few Recollections of the White House"
BOX 3	"The Haven"
BOX 3	"The Importance of Federal Culture"
BOX 3	"International Venture"
BOX 3	"The Man in the Bag"
BOX 4	"Pineapple Army"
BOX 4	"The Preservation of Antiquity"
BOX 4	"The Preservation of Eccentricity"
BOX 4	"Reflections on a Juvenile Republic"
BOX 4	"Security Problems in the Seventh Air Force"
BOX 4	"Sentimental Journeys"
BOX 4	"Some Preliminary Thoughts on the Museum of Architecture"
BOX 4	"Spanish Sketches"
BOX 4	"Sultry Christmas"
BOX 4	"A Temporary Status"
BOX 4	Untitled, 1957-1961, undated
BOX 5-7	Miscellany, 1916-1964 Papers relating to Purves's military career during World War I and World II, appointment calendars, bills and receipts, biographical papers, photographs, and printed matter. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 5	Agreement for dissolution of firm of Purves and Day
BOX 5	Appointment calendars
BOX 5	Appointment and travel schedules
BOX 5	Architectural drawings
BOX 5	Bills and receipts
BOX 5	Biographical material
BOX 5	Invitations
BOX 5	Military papers
BOX 5	Miscellaneous
BOX 5	World War I
BOX 6	World War I
BOX 7	World War II
BOX 7	Obituary
BOX 7	General miscellany
BOX 7	Printed matter
BOX 7	Relating to Kenneth Grahame
BOX 7	Miscellaneous